

*We claim:*

1. A surface retarder composition comprising: at least one cement set retarding active component dispersed in a vegetable oil or derivative thereof, an animal oil or derivative thereof, or a mixture of said oils or derivatives thereof.

2. The composition of claim 1 wherein said vegetable oil, said animal oil, or mixture or derivative thereof comprises not less than 1% and not greater than 98% by total weight of the composition.

3. The composition of claim 2 wherein said vegetable oil, said animal oil, or mixture thereof comprises not less than 25% and not greater than 92% by total weight of the composition.

4. The composition of claim 3 wherein said vegetable oil, said animal oil, or mixture thereof comprises not less than 50% and not greater than 90% by total weight of the composition.

5. The composition of claim 4 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is dispersed in a vegetable oil.

6. The composition of claim 5 wherein said vegetable oil is selected from the group consisting of rapeseed oil, sunflower oil, soy bean oil, castor oil, peanut oil, grape seed oil, corn oil, canola oil, coconut oil, linseed oil, sesame oil, olive oil, palm oil, almond oil, avocado oil, china wood oil, cocoa oil, safflower oil, hemp seed oil, walnut oil, poppy seed oil, oiticaca oil, palm nut oil, perilla oil, pecan oil, tung oil, and pine tar oil.

7. The composition of claim 1 wherein said vegetable comprises at least 50% by total weight of rapeseed oil.

8. The composition of claim 1 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is dispersed in a vegetable oil or derivative thereof.

9. The composition of claim 8 wherein said vegetable oil derivative comprises one or more materials selected from the group consisting of mono and diglycerides of C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty acids, esters of C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty acids, ethoxylated

compounds of C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty acids, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty alcohols, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty amines, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty amides, and tall oil derivatives.

10. The composition of claim 1 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is dispersed in a vegetable oil or derivative thereof, and said vegetable oil or derivative being an essential oil.

11. The composition of claim 1 wherein said essential oil is selected from the essences of orange, grapefruit, lemon, citrus, and pinetree.

12. The composition of claim 1 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is dispersed in an animal oil selected from the group consisting of lard oil, bone oil, herring oil, cod liver oil, neatsfoot oil, sardine oil, lanoline oil, fish oil, sheep wool oil, and tallow oil.

13. The composition of claim 12 wherein said animal oil contains a material selected from the group consisting of mono and diglycerides of C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty acids, esters of C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty acids, ethoxylated compounds of C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty acids, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty alcohols, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty amines, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>30</sub> fatty amides, and tall oil derivatives.

14. The composition of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises at least two different vegetable oils, or a vegetable oil and a vegetable oil derivative.

15. The composition of claim 1 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is a sugar, or an acid or salt thereof.

16. The composition of claim 15 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is present in an amount not less than 1% and not greater than 20% by total weight of the composition.

17. The composition of claim 16 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acid or its salt, malic acid or its salt, tartaric acid or its salt, citric acid or its salt, gluconic acid or its salt, heptagluconic acid or its salt.

18. The composition of claim 16 wherein said at least one cement set retarding active component is a sugar.

19. The composition of claim 18 wherein said sugar is selected from the group consisting of sucrose, roferose, dextrose, maltose, lactose, xylose, fructose, mannose, and glucose.

20. The composition of claim 1 further comprising water or  
5 petroleum-based solvent in an amount of 0.005%-25% based on total weight of the composition.

21. The composition of claim 1 further comprising a pigment, colorant, dye, filler, rheology modifier, viscosity modifier, or mixture thereof.

22. A method comprising: applying a coating of composition 1 onto  
10 a hydratable cementitious material surface.

23. The method of claim 22 further comprising washing away a surface portion of said coated material, thereby revealing an etched portion.